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SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/SYRIA: FURTHER CONCESSIONS MUST BE
EARNED

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Classified By: Political Economic Counselor Andrew C. Mann for reasons
1.5(b,d)

(C) On July 23, Poloff delivered reftel points to Gert Heijkoop, deputy director of the MFA North Africa and Middle East Department. According to Heijkoop, the Netherlands have grave doubts about President Assad's ulterior motives in pursuing further negotiations with Europe. President Assad's recent trip to Paris produced plenty of talk by Syria, which leaves the Netherlands skeptical as to whether Syria will also "walk the walk." For the time being the Netherlands has taken a wait and see attitude. They are hoping results from the upcoming trips to Damascus by French President Sarkozy and Lebanese President Sleiman will provide the Netherlands with additional information on Syria's motives. For now, said Heijkoop, "further concessions from our side will have to be earned by the Syrians, every step of the way."

Gallagher